

Meeting Date: July 23, 2020

Agenda Item No. 5.G.

Agenda Item: Season Setting, Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries

Bureau Chief Approval:

Prepared by: Lance Hebdon, Anadromous Fish Manager

Background:

This agenda item concerns the setting of a fishing season for fall Chinook Salmon on portions of the Clearwater and Salmon rivers in August, September and October and the Snake River in August, September, October and November of 2020. Sport fisheries for fall Chinook Salmon have been conducted each year since 2008. Also, beginning in 2013 and continuing since then, a short section of the Snake River immediately downstream of Hells Canyon Dam has remained open to fall Chinook Salmon fishing into November. Hatchery and natural origin Snake River fall Chinook Salmon are a component of the Upriver Bright group. Fall Chinook Salmon broodstock needed for Snake River hatchery programs are collected at or downstream of Lower Granite Dam so there are no broodstock management concerns associated with sport fisheries. Fall Chinook Salmon that return to the fishing area are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and encounter rates on these listed fish are described in the Fishery Management and Evaluation Plan for the State of Idaho, Washington, and Oregon Anadromous Fish Species Sport Fishing Programs for Directed Adipose-Intact Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries submitted July 2018.

Specific boundaries will be described in a separate season proposal.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

Idaho Statute 36-104(b)2 gives the Commission the authority to make a rule or proclamation establishing seasons and methods for the taking of fish. Fishing Rules are provided in IDAPA 13.01.11

Public Involvement Process:

Public input on the proposed season was collected electronically in July via a survey available on the IDFG website. No public meetings were held due to Covid-19 restrictions/concerns.

Staff Recommendation:

Approve staff recommendation

Justification:

Salmon and steelhead mitigation hatcheries were built to mitigate or compensate for fishing opportunity lost as a result of hydropower development. The proposed seasons would provide anglers the opportunity to fish for returning adult hatchery Chinook salmon produced at Idaho mitigation hatcheries.